

## SSUDAC Meeting Summary February 21, 2013

**Members Present:** Ernest Bland, Carmen Camacho, Jessica Evans, Don Hague, Ed Levy, Jon Lourie, Yuri Van Mierlo, Melvin Tull

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Mr. Ernest Bland, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. Mr. Bland also introduced Ed Levy, the new committee member representing the Silver Spring Citizen's Advisory Committee.

### **Reports:**

#### **Police Briefing & Crime Report**

Lt. Elizabeth Hattenburg, 3<sup>rd</sup> Police Precinct

- Lt. Hattenburg discussed a string of 7-11 Convenience store robberies committed recently along Georgia Ave. and Eastern Ave. She distributed photos of the suspects captured from security tape, as well as photos of a stolen vehicle used in the robberies (not to be made publicly available).
- Lt. Hattenburg also stated that no incidents were reported during the County Executive's State of the County address held at the Silver Spring Civic Building on February 20, 2013.
- Lt. Hattenburg updated the committee on a set of arrests in an auto theft ring case, as well as two arrests in a series of local burglaries.

#### **Urban District Report**

Ms. Yvette Freeman, Silver Spring Urban District

Chair Ernest Bland noted that he and committee member Jon Lourie met with Reemberto Rodriguez and Yvette Freeman prior to the advisory committee meeting to discuss the Silver Spring Urban District budget. Mr. Bland utilized this information to share comments in a public forum hosted by the County Executive.

Ms. Freeman presented the Silver Spring Urban District Report, discussing a number of issues, including:

- An increase in graffiti in the downtown area, with a note that there has been a delay in removal of the graffiti as the equipment has been winterized and stored for the winter.
- Mr. Bland asked how graffiti is reported to staff. Ms. Freeman stated that reports are mainly filed by staff or members of the public that call the Urban District hotline

- Ms. Freeman also touched on the recent water main break on Ripley St., and highlighted the need for major street repairs on both Colesville Rd. and Wayne Ave.

#### Silver Spring Regional Area Director's Report

Mr. Reemberto Rodriguez, Silver Spring Regional Center

- Mr. Rodriguez presented his report, further emphasizing the Urban District hotline (240-876-2911) as a way to report graffiti, street repairs and other issues in the Silver Spring CBD.
- Mr. Rodriguez reported that Park & Planning is still considering the Studio Plaza project.
- Mr. Rodriguez also emphasized the need to improve the “livability/walkability/driveability” of Georgia Ave. and stated that 5-7% of downtown Silver Spring is currently under construction.

#### Urban District Budget Report

Mr. Reemberto Rodriguez and Ms. Yvette Freeman

- Yvette Freeman and Reemberto Rodriguez presented their budget report, highlighting that the FY 14 budget will be the same as the FY13 budget.
- Mr. Rodriguez noted that the County Executive's budget forum and hearings would be taking place in March.
- Mr. Rodriguez discussed cutbacks to the budget, specifically cuts to Regional Center staff, and a general increased budgetary demand due to residential development and public functions like nightlife and the need for new directional signs, as well as the County Executive's desire for a “hip factor” in downtown Silver Spring.
- Mr. Rodriguez also mentioned future demands such as the Silver Spring Transit Center, Metro's Purple Line and the updated Silver Spring Library.
- Ms. Freeman presented her portion of the budget report, highlighting a plan to improve trash and recycling efforts within the downtown area, specifically proposing the purchase and installation of new trash receptacles and the implementation of a recycling program.
- Ms. Freeman made a special note to suggest installation of specific “dog waste stations”, including biodegradable waste bags and specific trash receptacles for the waste.
- Ms. Freeman met with the Office of Management and Budget to present the trash/recycling/pet waste proposal. Ms. Freeman expressed optimism about receiving reasonable funding for her requests.

- Committee member Mel Tull proposed a slight increase to the dog license fee in order to help fund the dog waste stations.
- Other budget items mentioned were directional signs for major streets in the downtown area, a clarification on the amount of money being allocated for staffing needs, and a general inquiry as to the financial status of the parking lot districts.
- A motion to write a letter to the County Executive outlining the Silver Spring Urban District budget concerns was verbally proposed by committee member Jon Lourie. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Redbrick Development Group - 900 Thayer Ave (formerly The Adele Project)  
Mr. Stuart Cain

- Committee members heard a presentation from Mr. Stuart Cain and other members of the Redbrick Development group concerning a project to revive and update the project located at Thayer & Fenton Aves.
- The proposed project includes a combination retail/housing/office space that is 120,000 square feet, 6 stories tall and composed of approximately 120 housing units, a breakdown consisting of 25% studios, 50% 1 bedroom and 20-25% 2 bedroom units with an average size of 750 square feet.
- Project construction would begin in the summer of 2013, with estimated completion in late summer/early fall of 2014 (estimated 14-16 months of construction). Additional amenities within the building include various rooftop social spaces, a fitness facility and a Wi-Fi center.
- The committee raised concerns regarding the complexity of landscape architecture as well as requesting clarification about what kind of building materials will be used and who would be responsible for cleaning the building exterior.
- Committee members also expressed concerns regarding The Taste of Silver Spring and bringing in local restaurants and merchants in to the public space portion of the building.
- A motion was proposed and unanimously carried by the committee to send a letter of support for the project to both the County Executive as well as the County Council.

## New Business

- Committee Chair Ernest Bland verbally proposed two individual motions to approve both the December and January meeting summaries (for the record). December was unanimously approved for the record; while January was approved barring minor edits to the list of committee members present/absent.
- The second order of new business concerned United Therapeutics committee member Yuri Van Mierlo and the possibility of appointing another member of United Therapeutics to serve as a proxy when Mr. Van Mierlo could not be present. Further information concerning the official process to appoint a proxy was requested and the issue was left open.

## First Baptist Church Streetscape Presentation

Mr. William Landfair

- William Landfair and others involved in the project presented an overview of the redesign the section of Silver Spring along Wayne Ave., Fenton St. and Bonifant St. The design would encompass 25,000 square feet of retail and 259 apartments, with no commercial office space. The retail section would specifically inhabit the Bonifant St. and Wayne Ave. portion of the space.
- The project is to be presented to the County planning board on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013, with a projected construction start date of winter of 2013 or early 2014.
- The committee raised questions concerning accessibility as well as parking facilities.
- A motion to write a letter of support to the County Executive was proposed and unanimously passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.